

LONDON DAILY TELEGRAPH
23 DECEMBER 1975

New CIA chief aims to restore confidence

By RICHARD BEESTON in Washington

THE NEW head of the Central Intelligence Agency, Mr George Bush, who is due to assume command next month, is giving top priority to restoring the confidence and trust of British and other friendly intelligence services.

A CIA spokesman yesterday refused to confirm or deny reports that the agency was proposing a conference of Western Intelligence chiefs in Brussels early in the New Year but said if such a meeting were held it would not be made public.

Mr Bush, whose nomination by President Ford as CIA chief is expected to be approved by the Senate when it returns from the Christmas recess, shares the same concern as the present director, Mr William Colby, over the agency's inability to prevent exposure by Congress of its most delicate secrets.

Mr Colby, who was dismissed by Mr Ford last month and then hastily asked to stay on until the confirmation of Mr Bush, former United States representative in Peking, has given a warning that Britain and other Western secret services are now reluctant to provide the CIA with information on a confidential basis for fear it would be blown sky-high by Congress.

'Normal rules'

The Washington Post, in a series of articles on Intelligence services throughout the world, claims that CIA violations of its charter, including foreign assassination plots and domestic surveillance which have been the subject of Congressional investigations, fall "within the normal rules" of the world's most powerful espionage agencies.

Its London correspondent, Bernard Nossiter, says today that British Intelligence stage-manages coups, burglars safes and blackmails like most of the others.

It names "C," head of the Secret Intelligence Service, as Maurice Oldfield and the headquarters as Century House, Westminster Bridge Road.

"Innocent callers are told it houses the Department of the Environment. But each morning a West Indian bus driver piloting the No. 53 for Plumstead Common cries out as he pulls to the stop 'All right, this is where all you spooks get off,'" the article stated.

It also claims that "Fleet Street relies on the secret vote to keep its correspondents in the field these days" and quotes a "contributing editor at one of Britain's most distinguished journals," which is not named, as saying that more than half of its full-time foreign staff correspondents are "on the SIS payroll."